



**Testimony of AARP Volunteer, Pat Gerckens**

**Opposing Governor's Enrollment Cap to the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders**

**Appropriations Committee**

**Feb. 16, 2016**

Good evening members of the Appropriations Committee, I am Pat Gerckens from Derby I am 79 and must say up front, that CT is the only place that I choose to live and expire. We raised four children and for working class people, managed to give them a decent lifestyle.

Now in my golden years I must seriously think of what is in store for me, health wise. I am fairly healthy (except for a couple of falls when my daughter took away all of my heels and for my short term memory), but, I am definitely aging and creaking some. I still live in the same little ranch that we moved into in 1965. The thought of having to leave here and move into a nursing facility is , what a shame, no family/no one who cares.

This little home in Derby is the core for my children and grandchildren's memories, special occasions etc. I would like to stay till the end with help if it is needed. Like most seniors my age, I wish to live independently at home for as long as possible. Thankfully Patty my daughter is around and she helps (the boys, you know the old slogan: "A son's a son till he takes a wife but, a daughter's a daughter all of her life") know what I mean??... 'Nuff said.

I am really concerned about the cap Governor Malloy proposed to the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders. Without access to Meals on Wheels, Visiting Nurses, home help and adult care services provided through that program thousands of seniors like me will be left to fend for ourselves, with limited resources. The option to live at home-- and receive the care we need--will be unaffordable and many will be forced into nursing homes.

But, you have the power to change that. You can ensure that seniors have access to cost-effective services at home by rejecting Governor Malloy's proposal to cap enrollment in the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders.

PLEASE, consider us seniors and remember that you all will be there some day. Don't you want the option to age in place with dignity and grace? I do. Thank you for your time.